

State financing, tuition, cost containment dominate Advisory Council session Sept. 29

Three national experts on tuition, higher education financing and cost management met with the Board and its Advisory Council Sept. 29, 2009, at Seattle University.

Don Heller – High tuition hinders low-income participation



Don Heller, professor of education and director of the Center for Study of Higher Education at Pennsylvania State University, said the cost of higher education in our state has risen this decade but is still affordable compared to other four-year, public universities nationwide.

Five decades of research on the impact of tuition on financial aid attendance and persistence show:

- Rising prices do affect student decisions to attend and persist. The strongest affect comes at the lowest income levels.
- As students go up the income ladder there is greater price flexibility.
- Ninety-eight percent of upper-income students participate in postsecondary education... but among lower- income students the percentage is less than half that... and, over three decades, we have not closed this gap. [Read more.](#)

Dennis Jones – Obama’s higher education goal

Dr. Dennis Jones, president of the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS), said President Obama has set high expectations – by 2020 the U.S. will have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world.

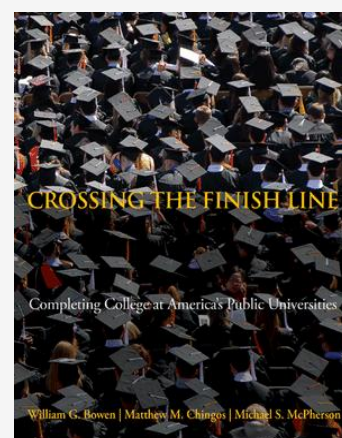
However, Jones said, Obama’s staff is still dithering about what this means. There are high expectations, few resources and a sense that we need to figure out how to do it.

Jane Wellman – Improving productivity, lowering costs

Jane Wellman, executive director, Delta Cost Project, provided recommendations on how to meet the national (and state) goal to raise the level of educational attainment.

“To talk about rationalizing funding for higher education sounds fanciful, daunting, foolish. However, the job ahead is to get the strategy ready for when times turn around. That moment may not come for a year or two or three, but the places that will get this right are the ones who will have done the planning.” [Read Dennis and Jane’s comments.](#)

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[CROSSING THE FINISH LINE](#) [Completing College at](#) [America’s Public](#) [Universities](#)

Less than 60 percent of the students entering four-year colleges today in America are graduating.

What can be done?

“I strongly recommend this book about the impact prices have on financial aid.”

– Donald E. Heller

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Financial Aid Survey

The Student Financial Assistance Division of the Higher Education Coordinating Board recently completed a survey of the state’s financial aid directors.

Record demand for financial aid has lengthened the time required for processing requests and has caused some institutions to shift aid from one program to another. [Read more.](#)

Executive Director's Report

Ann Daley, HECB executive director, reported on progress developing a new System Design Plan, a requirement of the 2009 Legislature.

The process of creating a new plan to manage the future development of the state's four-year higher education sector has attracted a great deal of interest among the institutions and their stakeholders, Daley said.

As a result, great care has been taken to keep the process open and flexible throughout, with numerous points of review, discussions, and public meetings. Now, a very preliminary draft is being shared with the plan workgroup.

"This outline will try to find common ground and allow feedback well before the Oct. 19 meeting... following that date, we have agreed to actually produce a set of recommendations, which would then go for discussion at the Oct. 27 HECB meeting." [Read more.](#)



Ann Daley

Arun Raha: recession bottoms out

The executive director of the Washington Economic & Revenue Forecast Council, Dr. Arun Raha, said the national recession appears to have bottomed out, and cited a number of key economic indicators that point to better times ahead.

Since Washington is the nation's most trade-dependent state, it is hoped our ties to the international economy will help us begin to recover more quickly, Raha said.

"It won't start to feel like a recovery until mid-2010, and after that it will take some time to begin realizing the benefits of the recovery in terms of increased tax revenues," Raha said. Job growth may lag until 2012. [Read more.](#)

Preliminary tuition policy draft presented

A preliminary draft report on tuition flexibility, required by the 2009 Legislature, was discussed at the Board meeting. HECB staff Jim Reed and Sarah Norris-Hall, the draft report's authors, provided a synopsis of its main recommendations.

The report recommends the state allow institutions greater flexibility to set undergraduate tuition policies according to their location and role and mission.

In addition, the report recommends the state adopt a general policy of funding at least 55 percent of instructional costs while holding tuition to no more than 45 percent of instructional costs.

Review of the draft report will be completed in November. [Read more.](#)

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Legislative Assembly Days

Representatives from public colleges and universities attended legislative hearings in Olympia Oct. 1-2, 2009.

Tim Yowell of the Senate Ways and Means Committee staff, summarized current fiscal realities in public higher education.

View the PowerPoint by clicking on the icon below.



New Degree Programs

Eight options within the University of Washington Bothell Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies degree program were approved as separate degrees for fall 2010.

- Environmental Studies
- Interdisciplinary Arts
- American Studies
- Global Studies
- Society, Ethics & Human Behavior
- Culture, Literature & the Arts
- Science, Technology & Society
- Community Psychology

Other degrees approved:

- Master of Education in Educational Leadership-UWB
- Master of Pharmaceutical Bioengineering - UW
- Master of Science and Doctor of Philosophy in Biological and Agricultural Engineering - WSU